

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claims 1-3, 8-9, and 14-16 are amended to more clearly define the invention and claims 17-20 are added. Claims 1, 14, and 17 are independent.

These amendments are made only to more particularly point out the invention for the Examiner and not for narrowing the scope of the claims or for any reason related to a statutory requirement for patentability.

Applicants also note that, notwithstanding any claim amendments herein or later during prosecution, Applicants' intent is to encompass equivalents of all claim elements.

Claims 1 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwasaki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,072,403) in view of Okada et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,700,476). Claims 2-7, 12-13, and 15-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwasaki et al., in view of Okada et al., and further in view of Tanaka (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0043017). Claims 8-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwasaki et al., in view of Okada et al., in view of Tanaka, and further in view of Folwell et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,785,429). Claims 10-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwasaki et al., in view of Okada et al., in view of Tanaka, and further in view of Hama (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0042292).

These rejections are respectfully traversed in the following discussion.

I. THE CLAIMED INVENTION

An exemplary embodiment of the claimed invention, as defined by, for example, independent claim 1, is directed to a door lock controller that includes a transmitter for

transmitting a signal including a specific identification code, a receiver for receiving the signal from the transmitter, a request switch for prompting the receiver to listen for the signal, a control section that determines when the receiver does not receive the signal from the transmitter, a storage section for storing a cipher on the basis of an actuation of the request switch if said control section determines that the receiver does not receive the signal from the transmitter, and a door lock unlocking section that unlocks the door lock when a coincidence exists between a previously stored cipher and the cipher in the storage section.

Conventional door lock controllers require an operator to enter a cipher through actuation of an outer door handle in coordination with a beep. However, the operation of the door handle in this manner is easily observable and, therefore, subject to theft.

In stark contrast to these conventional door lock controllers, an exemplary embodiment of the present invention includes a door lock controller that stores a cipher that is based on the actuation of a request switch if a control section determines that a receiver does not receive a signal from a transmitter. In this manner, the present invention enables safe unlocking of a door without risking theft of a cipher.

II. THE 35 U.S.C. § 112, SECOND PARAGRAPH REJECTION

The Examiner alleges that claims 1-16 are indefinite. While Applicants submit that such would be clear to one of ordinary skill in the art to allow them to know the metes and bounds of the invention, taking the present Application as a whole, to speed prosecution claims 1-3, 8-9, and 14-16 have been amended in accordance with Examiner Brown's very helpful suggestions.

In view of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this

rejection.

III. THE PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

A. The Iwasaki et al. reference in view of the Okada et al. reference

Regarding the rejection of claim 1 and 14, the Examiner alleges that the Okada et al. reference would have been combined with the Iwasaki et al. reference to form the claimed invention. Applicants submit, however, that these references would not have been combined and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

None of the applied references teaches or suggests a door lock controller that stores a cipher that is based on the actuation of a request switch if a control section determines that a receiver does not receive a signal from a transmitter. As explained above, this feature is important for enabling the safe unlocking of a door without risking theft of a cipher.

In stark contrast to the claimed invention, the Iwasaki et al. reference discloses a door lock controller which controls the door lock only based upon a signal that is received from a transmitter. In particular, the Iwasaki et al. reference discloses sending an operation signal to a transceiver 6 in response to actuation of a starter 7 and receiving an identification code from the transceiver 6. The door lock controller that is disclosed by the Iwasaki et al. reference only unlocks the door lock if the identification code that is received from the transmitter matches a predetermined identification code. (See, for example, col. 2, lines 53-64).

The door lock controller that is disclosed by the Iwasaki et al. reference is not capable of storing a cipher that is based on the actuation of a request switch if a control section determines that a receiver does not receive a signal from a transmitter. Rather, the door lock

controller that is disclosed by the Iwasaki et al. reference is only capable of storing a cipher that is received by the receiver from a transmitter.

The Okada et al. reference does not remedy the deficiencies of the Iwasaki et al. reference.

Like the Iwasaki et al. reference, the Okada et al. reference is only capable of storing a cipher that is received from a transmitter.

The Okada et al. reference discloses an on-vehicle remote controller which includes an identification receiving means for receiving an identification signal that was transmitted from a portable transmitter and which checks the identification signal against a predetermined proper identification to determine whether to unlock a door. (Col. 2, lines 9-24).

The Okada et al. reference does not teach or suggest storing a cipher that is based on the actuation of a request switch if a control section determines that a receiver does not receive a signal from a transmitter.

The Examiner refers to col. 7, line 14, to col. 8, line 45 and alleges that the Okada et al. reference discloses detecting whether a receiver is incapable of receiving a transmitted signal because of interference. However, contrary to the Examiner's allegations, this portion of the Okada et al. reference teaches issuing an identification request signal (step S12, see Fig. 6) and determining whether a response to the identification request signal is received (step S13). If, the receiver "is incapable of receiving a transmitted signal because of interference" the Okada et al. reference would merely determine that no response is received in step S13 and continue to steps S22 and S23 where the error flag would be reset to zero if not already at zero and then "waits 200 msec, and jumps back to step S12." (Col. 8, lines 4 - 11).

In other words, if the device that is disclosed by the Okada et al. reference does not receive a signal from the transmitter the Okada et al. reference does not provide any method by which a door may be unlocked.

Clearly, the Okada et al. reference does not remedy the deficiencies of the Iwasaki et al. reference.

Moreover, Applicants submit that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner. Indeed, the references are directed to completely different matters and problems.

The Iwasaki et al. reference is concerned with a door knob being actuated to a position where the door locking mechanism is incapable of unlocking the door before the door unlocking system is able to receive and verify an identification signal received from a transmitter. (Col. 2, lines 10 - 19).

In stark contrast, the Okada et al. reference is concerned with the completely different and unrelated problem of reliably operating an on-vehicle device even when a plurality of vehicles and/or portable devices exist in the same area. (Col. 2, lines 2 - 6).

One of ordinary skill in the art who was concerned with the problem of a door knob being actuated to a position where the door locking mechanism is incapable of unlocking the door before the door unlocking system is able to receive and verify an identification signal received from a transmitter, as the Iwasaki et al. reference is concerned with solving, would not have referred to the Okada et al. reference, and vice-versa, because the Okada et al. reference is concerned with the completely different and unrelated problem of reliably operating an on-vehicle device even when a plurality of vehicles and/or portable devices exist in the same area. Thus, the references would not have been combined.

Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of claims 1 and 14.

B. The Iwasaki et al. reference in view of the Okada et al. reference and further in view of the Tanaka reference

Regarding the rejection of claims 2-7, 12-13, and 15-16, the Examiner alleges that the Okada et al. reference would have been combined with the Iwasaki et al. reference and further alleges that the Tanaka reference would have been combined with the Okada et al. reference and the Iwasaki et al. reference to form the claimed invention. Applicants submit, however, that these references would not have been combined and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

None of the applied references teaches or suggests a door lock controller that stores a cipher that is based on the actuation of a request switch if a control section determines that a receiver does not receive a signal from a transmitter. This feature is important for enabling safe unlocking of a door without risking theft of a cipher.

As explained above, neither the Iwasaki et al. reference nor the Okada et al. reference teaches or suggests these features.

The Tanaka reference does not remedy the deficiencies of the Iwasaki et al. reference and the Okada et al. reference.

Indeed, the Examiner does not allege that the Tanaka reference remedies these deficiencies.

Rather, the Tanaka reference discloses a vehicle theft prevention device which relies upon receiving an identification signal from a transmitter (step 502) before unlocking a door

(step 504).

The Tanaka reference does not teach or suggest a door lock controller that stores a cipher that is based on the actuation of a request switch if a control section determines that a receiver does not receive a signal from a transmitter.

Therefore, the Tanaka reference does not remedy the deficiencies of the Iwasaki et al. reference and the Okada et al. reference.

Moreover, Applicants submit that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner. Indeed, the references are directed to completely different matters and problems.

In contrast to the Iwasaki et al. reference and the Okada et al. reference, the Tanaka reference is concerned with the problem of a lock control mechanism for both a door lock and a running lock are provided by the same remote controller. [0010].

One of ordinary skill in the art who was concerned with the problem of a door knob being actuated to a position where the door locking mechanism is incapable of unlocking the door before the door unlocking system is able to receive and verify an identification signal received from a transmitter, as the Iwasaki et al. reference is concerned with solving, or who was concerned with the problem of reliably operating an on-vehicle device even when a plurality of vehicles and/or portable devices exist in the same area, as the Okada et al. reference was concerned with, would not have referred to the Tanaka reference, and vice-versa, because the Tanaka et al. reference is concerned with the completely different and unrelated problem of a lock control mechanism for both a door lock and a running lock are provided by the same remote controller. Thus, the references would not have been combined.

Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of claims

2-7, 12-13, and 15-16.

C. The Iwasaki et al. reference in view of the Okada et al. reference and further in view of the Tanaka reference and in yet further view of the Folwell et al. reference.

Regarding the rejection of claims 8-9, the Examiner alleges that the Okada et al. reference would have been combined with the Iwasaki et al. reference and further alleges that the Tanaka reference would have been combined with the Okada et al. reference and the Iwasaki et al. reference and yet further alleges that the Folwell et al. reference would have been combined with the Okada et al. reference, the Iwasaki et al. reference, and the Tanaka reference to form the claimed invention. Applicants submit, however, that these references would not have been combined and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

None of the applied references teaches or suggests a door lock controller that stores a cipher that is based on the actuation of a request switch if a control section determines that a receiver does not receive a signal from a transmitter. This feature is important for enabling safe unlocking of a door without risking theft of a cipher.

As explained above, none of the Iwasaki et al. reference, the Okada et al. reference, nor the Tanaka reference teaches or suggests these features.

The Folwell et al. reference does not remedy the deficiencies of the Iwasaki et al. reference, the Okada et al. reference, and the Tanaka reference.

Indeed, the Examiner does not allege that the Folwell et al. reference remedies these deficiencies.

Rather, the Folwell et al. reference discloses a range control system “for providing the operator or controller of a vehicle that is approaching an obstruction with a visual or audible signal to indicate when the vehicle is within a predetermined range of the obstruction.” (Col. 1, lines 5-11).

Clearly, the Folwell et al. reference does not teach or suggest anything at all that is even remotely related to door lock controllers, let alone a door lock controller that stores a cipher that is based on the actuation of a request switch if a control section determines that a receiver does not receive a signal from a transmitter.

Moreover, Applicants submit that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner. Indeed, the references are directed to completely different matters and problems.

In contrast to the Iwasaki et al. reference, the Okada et al. reference, and the Tanaka reference, the Folwell, et al. reference is concerned with the problem of “providing the operator or controller of a vehicle that is approaching an obstruction with a visual or audible signal to indicate when the vehicle is within a predetermined range of the obstruction.” (Col. 1, lines 5-10).

One of ordinary skill in the art who was concerned with the problem of a door knob being actuated to a position where the door locking mechanism is incapable of unlocking the door before the door unlocking system is able to receive and verify an identification signal received from a transmitter, as the Iwasaki et al. reference is concerned with solving, who was concerned with the problem of reliably operating an on-vehicle device even when a plurality of vehicles and/or portable devices exist in the same area, as the Okada et al. reference was concerned with, or who was concerned with the problem of a lock control mechanism for

both a door lock and a running lock are provided by the same remote controller, as the Tanaka et al. reference is concerned with addressing, would not have referred to the Folwell, et al. reference, and vice-versa, because the Folwell et al. reference is concerned with the completely different and unrelated problem of “providing the operator or controller of a vehicle that is approaching an obstruction with a visual or audible signal to indicate when the vehicle is within a predetermined range of the obstruction..” Thus, the references would not have been combined.

Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of claims 8-9.

D. The Iwasaki et al. reference in view of the Okada et al. reference and further in view of the Tanaka reference and in yet further view of the Hama reference

Regarding the rejection of claims 10-11, the Examiner alleges that the Okada et al. reference would have been combined with the Iwasaki et al. reference and further alleges that the Tanaka reference would have been combined with the Okada et al. reference and the Iwasaki et al. reference and yet further alleges that the Hama reference would have been combined with the Okada et al. reference, the Iwasaki et al. reference, and the Tanaka reference to form the claimed invention. Applicants submit, however, that these references would not have been combined and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

None of the applied references teaches or suggests a door lock controller that stores a cipher that is based on the actuation of a request switch if a control section determines that a

receiver does not receive a signal from a transmitter. This feature is important for enabling safe unlocking of a door without risking theft of a cipher.

As explained above, none of the Iwasaki et al. reference, the Okada et al. reference, nor the Tanaka reference teaches or suggests these features.

The Hama reference does not remedy the deficiencies of the Iwasaki et al. reference, the Okada et al. reference, and the Tanaka reference.

Indeed, the Examiner does not allege that the Hama reference remedies these deficiencies.

Rather, the Hama reference discloses a wireless communication device for transmitting/receiving radio wave signals on electric power generated by an electric power generation system using natural energy. ([0002]).

Clearly, the Hama reference does not teach or suggest anything at all that is even remotely related to a door lock controller that stores a cipher that is based on the actuation of a request switch if a control section determines that a receiver does not receive a signal from a transmitter.

Moreover, Applicants submit that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner. Indeed, the references are directed to completely different matters and problems.

In contrast to the Iwasaki et al. reference, the Okada et al. reference, and the Tanaka reference, the Hama reference is concerned with the problem of providing “a wireless communication device in which the need for any battery used in a transmitting device for transmitting control signals or data signals is eliminated so that electric power generated only from natural energy can be used and downsizing can be implemented, and which can reduce

power consumption thereof by using very weak waves for which no license is required by the Radio Law in Japan.” ([0013]).

One of ordinary skill in the art who was concerned with the problem of a door knob being actuated to a position where the door locking mechanism is incapable of unlocking the door before the door unlocking system is able to receive and verify an identification signal received from a transmitter, as the Iwasaki et al. reference is concerned with solving, who was concerned with the problem of reliably operating an on-vehicle device even when a plurality of vehicles and/or portable devices exist in the same area, as the Okada et al. reference was concerned with, or who was concerned with the problem of a lock control mechanism for both a door lock and a running lock are provided by the same remote controller, as the Tanaka et al. reference is concerned with addressing, would not have referred to the Hama reference, and vice-versa, because the Hama reference is concerned with the completely different and unrelated problem of providing “a wireless communication device in which the need for any battery used in a transmitting device for transmitting control signals or data signals is eliminated so that electric power generated only from natural energy can be used and downsizing can be implemented, and which can reduce power consumption thereof by using very weak waves for which no license is required by the Radio Law in Japan.” Thus, the references would not have been combined.

Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of claims 10-11.

III. FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSION

Regarding the objection to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a), the Office Action alleges that the drawings do not appear to illustrate a determination section. However, contrary to that allegation, Applicants respectfully submit that one of ordinary skill in the art understands that the control section 83 corresponds to the determination section. In other words, the drawings very clearly illustrate a control section 83 which corresponds to the recited determination section. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this objection.


In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-20, all the claims presently pending in the Application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the Application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Date: 1/31/14

Respectfully Submitted,



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